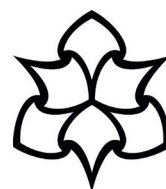CILIP The library and information association

A Report on Research to Support the Development of a Sector-wide Research Portal/evidence-base

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Executive summary

The aims of this research were to:

- Produce a model for a portal that will provide access to a Library and Information sector-wide research/evidence-base
- Provide recommendations for possible funding sources.

The main methods of data gathering were: desk-based research to identify other research portals and evidence bases that exist; stakeholder survey (1,150 responses); and stakeholder interviews (13).

The results suggest an interest in an evidence portal gauged from the number of survey responses and the perceived importance of evidence and research within the sector. However, as there is currently no specific model of a portal, further investigation is recommended to test demand for particular features.

There are differences between sectors in the use of research and demand for different types of evidence sources. This suggests that different sectors may require different features within a portal.

The most common ways of using research were to: improve existing services; professional development; and to create new services.

The most common challenges experienced in accessing research included: lack of time; lack of awareness of where to find research; and inability to access certain resources.

There are a wide range of potential users for a research portal, including information professionals across a number of sectors as well as people engaged in teaching and research, professionals from other sectors and decision makers.

Case studies were the most requested type of resource for a research/evidence portal. This was true across sectors. Data sets, academic articles and research reports were also considered important.

The free availability of a portal was considered important, especially for those in the public and school sectors.

Rigor of evidence, regular updating and sector wide coverage were also seen as important.

A collaborative approach to funding was suggested to demonstrate value of the portal across different library and information sectors. Comments from the survey respondents and interviewees suggest that it is important that any CILIP portal is co-funded (or supported in-kind) by a range of organisations. These might include Research Councils, charitable funding organisations and partners in the former Library Research Coalition.

Based on this preliminary study, a model for a research/evidence portal for the library and information sector could include the following elements:

Essential Features:

- Case studies
- Data sets/statistics
- Open access search engines and repositories
- Research reports

- Regular updating
- A variety of entry points to evidence e.g. sector, use and topic
- Sharing options e.g. Twitter.

Recommended Features:

- Summaries or structured abstracts of key papers and reports
- Sector specific resource
- Indicators of rigour
- Links to other CILIP resources.

Additional Features:

- Comments facility
- Ability to export references
- Briefing documents for different stakeholders
- Alerting services.

Options for future consideration:

- User contributed case studies
- Combining data sets
- Research framework/gap analysis.

This report is, of course, only the first stage of this process. The next stage is to consult more widely on this proposed model and develop specific examples to demonstrate some of the options suggested. There is no commonly accepted definition of a portal within the sector, so it is important to provide more details and concrete examples for stakeholders to comment on at the next stage.

1. Introduction

CILIP wishes to adopt an evidence-based approach to its policy development and advocacy work and one action line of the first priority area – advocacy – is the development of a robust evidence-base. The 2016-2020 Action Plan states that: "Our advocacy will be founded on a robust and reliable evidence base, developed in collaboration with our partners across the sector". However evidence and an evidence-based approach is not only important in advocacy, but across all of CILIP's priority areas. CILIP also believes that the approach is the right one for the information and knowledge sector.

An evidence-based approach is important in:

- Building trust and credibility with other stakeholders including user communities, parent institutions, government and major influencers
- Advocating and demonstrating value added by the sector
- Supporting improvement and development of services
- Providing rationale for vision and direction for the sector and its constituent parts
- Identifying gaps in the evidence and programmes to address such gaps.

The aim is that CILIP will become an authoritative source of data and evidence about information management and libraries by 2020 and an active partner in providing a research and evidence framework for the sector as a whole.

As a result of its commitment to adopting an evidence based approach to policy and practice across the information sector, in autumn 2017, CILIP engaged in scoping out the requirements for the development of a sector-wide evidence-base/portal. CILIP therefore commissioned researchers at Birmingham City University and Manchester Metropolitan University to consider the views of various stakeholders about their current evidence needs and what would be desirable in such a portal. The findings of this research are reported below. This is anticipated as the first stage in a process that will involve working with like-minded partners in the information sector to develop a portal.

The aims of this research are to:

- Produce a model for a portal that will provide access to a Library and Information sector-wide research/evidence-base
- Provide recommendations for possible funding sources.

The objectives are to:

- Map stakeholders that will use the portal and collect, synthesise and analyse information about their research and evidence needs.
- Identify and assess research portals, or other similar research and evidence bases, that have been established by other bodies
- Synthesise the data collected in order to develop a model for a portal that will provide access to a library and Information sector-wide research/evidence-base
- Use the data collected to make recommendations about possible funding sources.

2. Methods

The main methods of data gathering were: desk-based search, stakeholder survey and stakeholder interviews. In addition, we consulted with members of the CILIP Project Group.

2.1 Desk Based Research

Desk based research was undertaken to identify other research portals and evidence bases that exist. This included information sector portals internationally (available in English); portals developed by other professional associations; and portals in other sectors (e.g. education, criminal justice, health, international development).

Possible portals were identified via Internet searches, searches of literature databases (e.g. LISA, Scopus, Web of Knowledge) and suggestions from the Project Group and survey respondents. For each portal/evidence base, we analysed the content provided; the rationale for the resource; the types of users; ways in which evidence is evaluated and presented; access (e.g. registration requirement); methods of updating; multimedia features; personalisation options; and funding arrangements. In total, we reviewed 48 portals.

2.2 Survey of Stakeholders

A short online survey was produced (using Bristol Online Survey software). The survey covered topics including:

- Current research and evidence needs
- Current practice in using research and evidence (e.g. ways evidence is used)
- Difficulties accessing research or evidence
- Ideally what research and evidence sources would be required in a portal
- Key features of a possible evidence/research portal.

To encourage responses, the majority of questions were tick box style, with the option for additional open-ended comments to provide additional information or options. The responses were analysed descriptively.

A link to the survey was sent to representatives of various stakeholder groups including CILIP members, special interest groups and staff; Research Libraries UK (RLUK); Council for Learning Resources in Colleges (CoLRIC); the School Library Association (SLA); Society of College, National and University Libraries (SCONUL); Jisc; National Libraries; CB Resourcing (recruitment agency); and NHS Library and Knowledge Services Leads. In addition, a link to the survey was circulated via other sources including social media and LIS and related mailing lists (e.g. LIS-PUB-LIBS, SCHOOL-LIBRARIES-RESEARCH, LIS-Bailer, LIS-LINK). To reach a sample of LIS students, information was circulated to students in information studies departments including MMU's Information Department and Aberystwyth University's Information Management, Libraries and Archives.

While every effort was made to have as wide coverage as possible, the survey was not intended to be perfectly representative of each of the stakeholder groups, or the sector as a whole. However, the number of responses from key stakeholder groups were checked at a mid-point in the survey period and efforts made to target groups with limited numbers of responses.

In total, 1,150 responses were received. Table 1 shows how respondents described their main role. By far the most common role was 'librarian' (70.1%). Retired was the only other option accounting for more than 5% of responses (6.0%).

Role	Number	%
Data Manager	7	0.6
Data Scientist	3	0.3
Information Manager	53	4.3
Knowledge Manager	19	1.7
Librarian	806	70.1
Consulting/Independent Information Professional	29	2.5
LIS researcher	11	1.0
Other researcher (please give details of subject area)	12	1.0
Policymaker	5	0.4
Student	20	1.7
Teacher/lecturer	17	1.5
Not working	5	0.4
Retired	69	6.0
Other	94	8.2
TOTAL	1150	100

Table 1: Would you describe yourself as mainly...

Amongst the other roles were: library manager, information specialist, archivist and library assistant. There were also 'other' responses from individuals outside the core information sector, for example, senior university administrator, journalist and web developer.

Table 2 shows the employment sectors for those identifying as data managers, data scientists, information managers, knowledge managers or librarians. More than one-third of respondents were from the HE sector (35.1%). This was, by far, the most heavily represented, followed by public libraries (17.6%), school libraries (14.9%), health care (8.8%) and FE (5.0%). Each of the other sectors accounted for less than 5% of responses. Where sector-by-sector analysis was possible, this was only carried out for sectors accounting for at least 5% of responses.

Sector	Number	%
Higher Education	310	35.1
Public	155	17.6
School	132	14.9
Health Care	78	8.8
Further Education	44	5.0
Government and Armed Forces	37	4.2
Not for Profit/Third sector	19	2.2
Law	17	1.9
National Libraries	16	1.8
Industry (Commercial Services)	14	1.6
Special Collections	14	1.6
Museums, Archives, Galleries and Heritage	12	1.4
Research	11	1.2
LIS Education	4	0.5
Prison	4	0.5
Consulting/Independent Information Professional	2	0.2
Industry (Extraction)	2	0.2
Social Care	2	0.2
Other	10	1.1
TOTAL	883[1]	100

Table 2: Which sector do you work in?

Six of the 10 'other' responses worked across two or more sectors (e.g. joint school/public libraries; HE/FE college).

Almost nine out of ten respondents were CILIP members (88.8%).

2.3 Stakeholder Interviews

Interviews were undertaken with a selection of stakeholders. In total, 13 interviews were conducted by telephone, online video link or face-to-face. This included:

- Key CILIP representatives
- Other potential stakeholders across a range of library and information sectors (e.g. British Library, DCMS, Jisc)
- Representatives of other portals that may provide suitable models (e.g. ALA, Research in Practice).

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[1] Due to the way in which a small number of respondents answered the first question, it was not possible to collect data on their sector.

3. Findings

The findings gathered through all these methods are reported thematically to respond to a series of questions exploring: the potential demand for an evidence base/research portal; possible users of a portal; proposed types of content and key features; and finally, funding options.

3.1 What evidence is there of a demand for an evidence base or research portal?

We investigated potential demand for an evidence base or research portal by asking stakeholders about their perceived importance and current use of research and evidence.

Figure 1 shows responses from the stakeholder survey to the question 'Overall, how important is research or evidence to you in your current role?' (1=unimportant, 10=highly important). This indicates the high importance of research to the majority of respondents. The modal (most common) response was 10 and mean value was 7.13 (s.d. 2.53). Overall, 52.4% of respondents gave a score of 8 or higher. The percentage of Knowledge and Information Managers rating the importance of research 8 or greater was 63.9%.
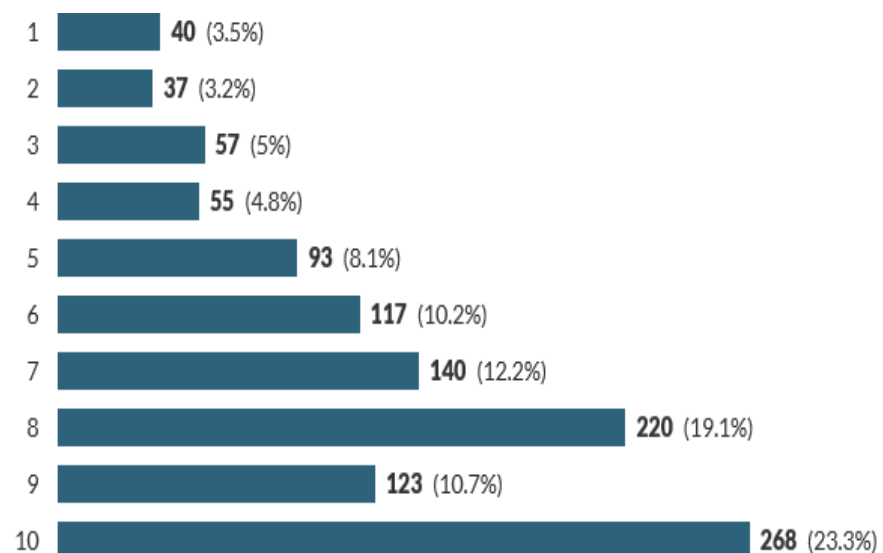

Figure 1: Overall, how important is research or evidence to you in your current role?

There was also a statistically significant difference between sectors (p<0.01). Table 3 below gives the percentage of respondents from each sector who indicated research has an importance of 8, 9 or 10. At almost 80%, the percentage rating research/evidence 8, 9 or 10 in importance in the health sector is more than double the percentages doing so in the FE or schools sectors.

Sector	% rating research important 8-10
Health	79.5% (62/78)
HE	61.0% (189/310)
Public	40.6% (63/155)
Schools	34.1% (45/132)
FE	31.8% (14/44)

Table 3: Respondents rating research importance 8, 9 or 10 by sector

Figure 2 shows how frequently respondents made use of various sources of research or evidence. The sources most frequently or very frequently used were: professional journals (62.6%), case studies (52.7%), academic journals (49.0%), published reports (44.5%) and data sets/statistics

(42.4%). Evidence portals[2] (11.7% used frequently or very frequently), assessment reports (20.3%) and research reviews (20.7%) were the least well-used type of resource.

HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU USE THE FOLLOWING?

■ Very frequently ■ Frequently ■ Occasionally ■ Rarely ■ Very rarely or never

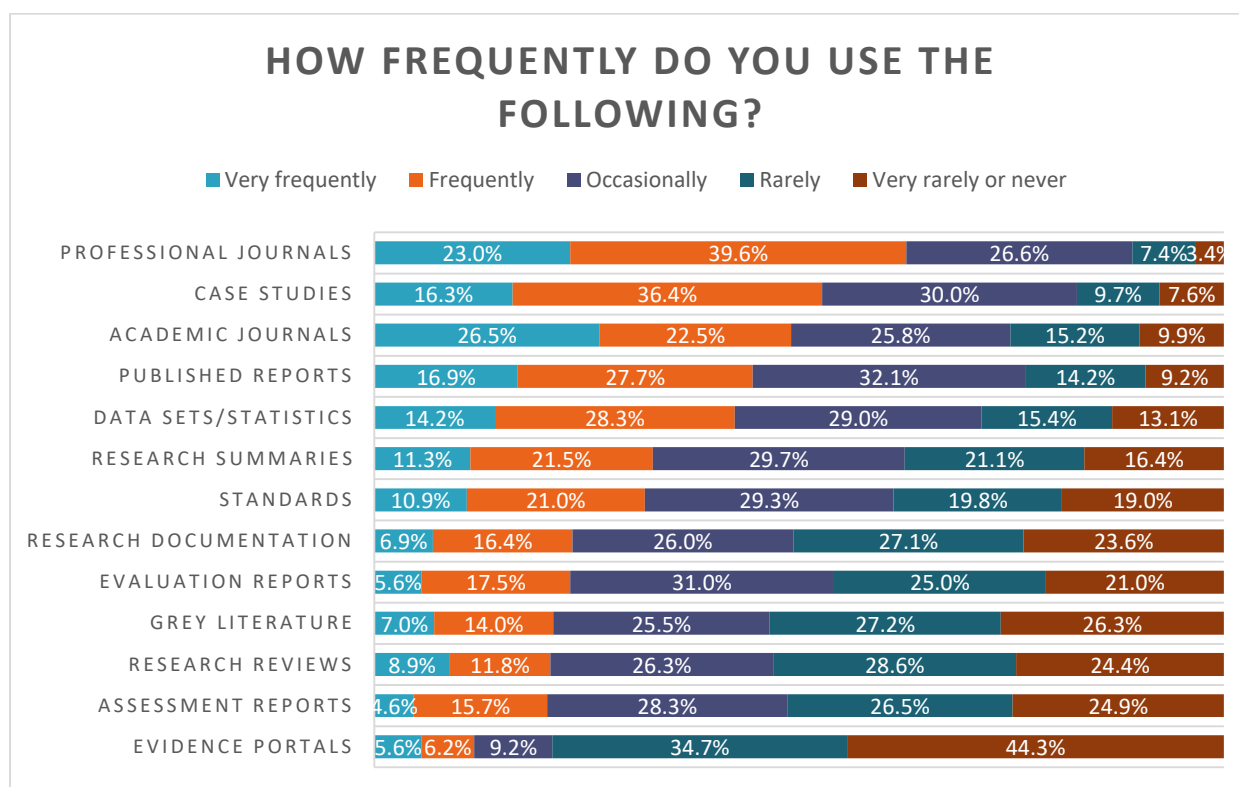| Resource	Very frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Very rarely or never
PROFESSIONAL JOURNALS	23.0%	39.6%	26.6%	7.4%	3.4%
CASE STUDIES	16.3%	36.4%	30.0%	9.7%	7.6%
ACADEMIC JOURNALS	26.5%	22.5%	25.8%	15.2%	9.9%
PUBLISHED REPORTS	16.9%	27.7%	32.1%	14.2%	9.2%
DATA SETS/STATISTICS	14.2%	28.3%	29.0%	15.4%	13.1%
RESEARCH SUMMARIES	11.3%	21.5%	29.7%	21.1%	16.4%
STANDARDS	10.9%	21.0%	29.3%	19.8%	19.0%
RESEARCH DOCUMENTATION	6.9%	16.4%	26.0%	27.1%	23.6%
EVALUATION REPORTS	5.6%	17.5%	31.0%	25.0%	21.0%
GREY LITERATURE	7.0%	14.0%	25.5%	27.2%	26.3%
RESEARCH REVIEWS	8.9%	11.8%	26.3%	28.6%	24.4%
ASSESSMENT REPORTS	4.6%	15.7%	28.3%	26.5%	24.9%
EVIDENCE PORTALS	5.6%	6.2%	9.2%	34.7%	44.3%

Figure 2: How frequently do you use the following?

As shown in Table 4, there was a significant difference between sectors for all types of research/evidence ($p < 0.01$ except for standards $p < 0.05$). Table 4 shows the percentage of respondents from each sector using each research/evidence type frequently or very frequently.

Resource type	FE (n=44)	Health (n=78)	HE (n=310)	Public (n=115)	Schools (n=132)
Academic journals	59.1%	83.3%	65.1%	7.8%	32.6%
Assessment reports	20.5%	43.6%	16.5%	18.7%	15.2%
Case studies	45.4%	74.3%	56.8%	53.5%	51.6%
Data sets/statistics	25.0%	39.7%	48.0%	67.6%	28.8%
Evaluation reports	20.5%	51.3%	18.0%	25.8%	15.2%
Evidence portals	9.1%	44.9%	9.0%	3.8%	5.3%
Grey literature	11.4%	62.8%	19.7%	5.1%	6.1%
Professional journals	61.4%	73.0%	63.5%	56.8%	64.4%
Published reports	31.8%	71.8%	44.6%	35.5%	34.1%
Research documentation	11.4%	28.5%	23.%	21.3%	17.4%
Research reviews	9.1%	60.3%	18.1%	4.5%	11.3%
Research summaries	15.9%	69.2%	31.3%	23.9%	18.1%
Standards	25.0%	53.9%	29.7%	29.0%	32.6%

Table 4: Resources used very frequently or frequently by sector

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[2] This may be due to the limited number of portals serving the sector at present.

All resource types were most frequently used within the health sector with the exception of data sets/statistics which were most frequently used in the public library sector. Table 5 shows the three most frequently used resource types for each sector. As can be seen, despite the differences in percentages using research/evidence resources, the types of resources used most frequently remained fairly consistent across sectors, with academic journals, professional journals and case studies featuring in most cases. The use of dataset/statistics was notable in the public sector.

FE	Health	HE	Public	Schools
1) Professional journals	1) Academic journals	1) Academic journals	1) Data sets/statistics	1) Professional journals
2) Academic journals	2) Case studies	2)Professional journals	2) Professional journals	2) Case studies
3) Case studies	3) Professional journals	3) Case studies	3) Case studies	3) Published reports

Table 5: Top 3 sources of research/evidence by sector

It is also worth noting that amongst Knowledge and Information Managers, the most frequently used sources of evidence were professional journals (62.5% used frequently or very frequently), academic journals (58.3%) and research reports (56.9%).

Another source of evidence felt to be important by survey respondents was professional or peer networks, both within the information sector and more widely. Other resources mentioned by small numbers of respondents included: theses, archival materials, news sites/newspapers, trials registers, primary data collected by organisations, textbooks, mailing lists, institutional repositories, market research, blog posts and conference presentations/proceedings.

Figure 3 shows the ways in which survey respondents said they made use of research. The most common use was to improve existing services or practices (73.4%). This was followed by professional development (63.9%) and making decisions about new services or practices (61.5%). In addition, 45.9% used research or evidence to influence others (e.g. advocacy).
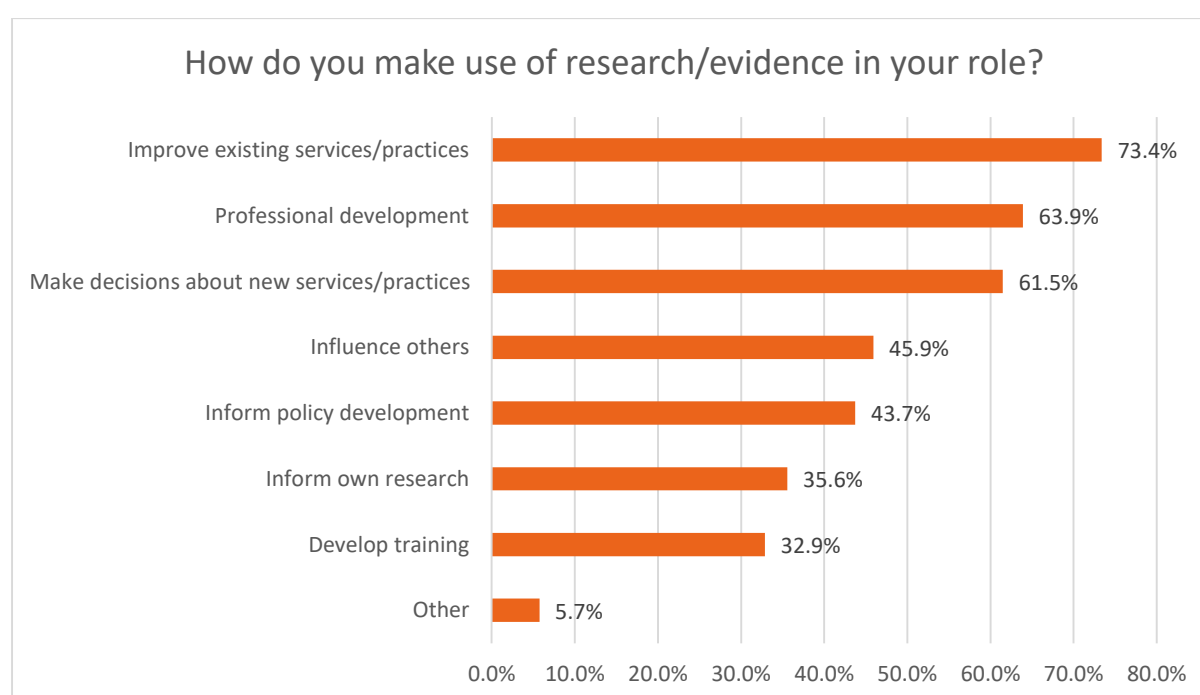

Figure 3: How do you make use of research or evidence in your current role?

The only use for which there was a significant difference between sectors was 'to develop training' (p<0.01). This was most common in the health sector (51.3%) and least common in the schools sector (24.2%). Other uses of research or evidence mentioned by survey respondents included: teaching; to support other people's research; to produce publications; and to bid for contracts.

As shown in Figure 4, by far the most common problem experienced in accessing research or evidence was lack of time (62.9%). This was followed by lack of awareness of where to find research/evidence (33.7%); inability to access relevant research or evidence, for example paywalls (31.0%); and lack of research/evidence to meet specific needs (28.1%); lack of skills to interpret data was not a common problem (12.9% only).
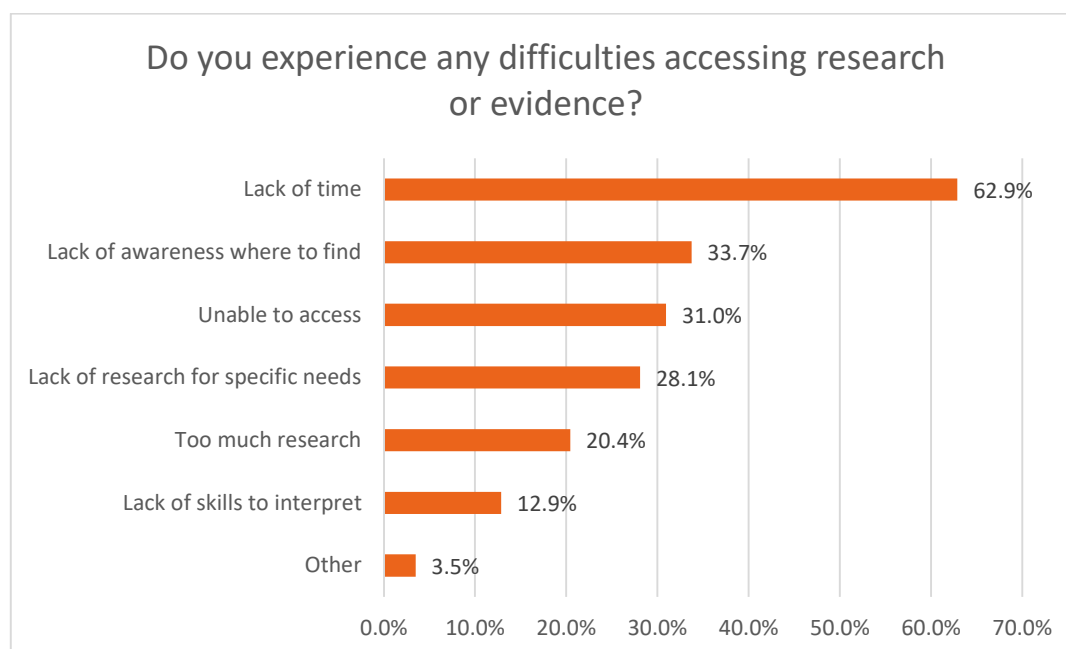

Figure 4: Do you experience any difficulties accessing research or evidence?

Amongst Knowledge and Information Managers, the order changed slightly: inability to access research was the second most frequently mentioned issue (51.4%).

When asked to describe other difficulties, most respondents elaborated on the themes already highlighted, for example:

> *Lack of relevant, real-world evidence that reflects the reality of the working environment in very small local authorities…*

> *Research and evidence very fragmented.*

Other difficulties mentioned were: the poor quality of some research; lack of support from institutional managers in the use of research; and the need for support in the practical implementation of research:

> *Managers on my team don't use any research or see any value in it.*

> *Research is great, but really you need to have it turned into guidelines or a toolkit so you don't spend all your time thinking what to do – you can just get on with it.*

Table 6 shows differences between sectors. There was no significant difference for 'lack of skills to interpret' or 'too much research/evidence to evaluate effectively'. However, there were sector-

specific differences for the other factors. Lack of research/evidence to meet specific needs was most notable as a problem in the health sector (42.3% of respondents) and least so in the HE sector (23.5%). Difficulties accessing research (e.g. paywalls) was, unsurprisingly less of a problem in the HE sector (21.3%); it was more of a problem among health sector staff (41.0%). Lack of awareness where to find evidence, on the other hand, was not such a problem in the health sector (21.8%), but was much more of a concern in the public library sector (54.8%). Finally, although lack of time was the most common problem for information professionals in all sectors, it perceived to be a bigger concern in schools (77.3%) than in FE (43.2%).

	FE (n=44)	Health (n=78)	HE (n=310)	Public (n=115)	Schools (n=132)	p value
Lack of skills to interpret	6.8%	11.4%	18.1%	15.5%	9.1%	p>0.05
Too much research	22.7%	23.1%	23.2%	14.8%	12.9%	p>0.05
Lack of research for specific needs	38.6%	42.3%	23.5%	31.0%	25.8%	p<0.01
Unable to access	29.5%	41.0%	21.3%	26.5%	31.1%	p<0.01
Lack of awareness where to find	34.1%	21.8%	32.6%	54.8%	33.3%	p<0.01
Lack of time	43.2%	55.1%	75.2%	71.0%	77.3%	p<0.01

Table 6: Difficulties accessing research or evidence by sector

Another difficulty raised by an interviewee was problems that could be faced in translating research into practice. They felt that distilling the key points and including advice on implementation was important.

3.1.1 Understanding of the term 'research portal'

Both the survey and interview responses highlighted the variation range of perceptions of what an evidence base or research portal might be[3]. As the desk research demonstrates, evidence portals can take a range of forms and offer a variety of resources and services depending on the needs of their particular audiences (see Appendix for examples). For example, a portal might simply be a collection of existing resources, or it could include tools or resources created specifically. As an interviewee pointed out:

> *…in terms of the aspirations of the portal, it could be huge but even as pointer it could be fab, doesn't have to be complex, but if it points to what already exists that would be fantastic.*

Some interviewees suggested alternatives to a portal such as alerting services and horizon scanning. An option mentioned by several interviewees was a 'research framework' to identify gaps and priorities for research in the sector. Where there was disagreement amongst interviewees was in whether this should be an alternative to a portal, or one of its outcomes.

3.2 Who would use a research/evidence portal?

We produced a map of potential stakeholders for the portal based on:

- Suggestions from the Project Group
- Analysis of audiences for existing portals
- Suggestions from survey respondents/interviewees.

As Figure 5 shows, potential stakeholders included information professionals (librarians, data managers, information managers, data scientists, independent consultants and others); those

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[3] The term was deliberately not defined in the survey as the purpose was to explore the types of services and resources might be needed rather than limit suggestions to a particular design of portal.

engaged in teaching and/or research (researchers, students, teachers/lecturers and trainers); professionals from other sectors (e.g. project managers, journalists); decision-makers (e.g. policymakers, funders); and other interested parties (e.g. retired, volunteers, jobseekers).

Whilst some of the interviewees appeared to view the proposed portal as a resource primarily for CILIP itself, the majority of interviewees and survey respondents appreciated that the portal was likely to have a significantly wider remit. Catering for the needs of the full range of stakeholders identified would of course be challenging, and even the core audience of information professionals can have markedly different needs depending on the sector in which they work and their role within that sector. This suggests that opting for different features within distinct sections of a portal catering for different sectors, roles or other characteristics may be worth considering.

As several interviewees pointed out, there needed to be a reason for potential users to go to the CILIP portal/evidence base rather than an alternative source of evidence, whether this was by providing something that was not offered elsewhere, or doing it better in some way. As one pointed out, the trusted 'CILIP brand' could be an important factor in encouraging usage.
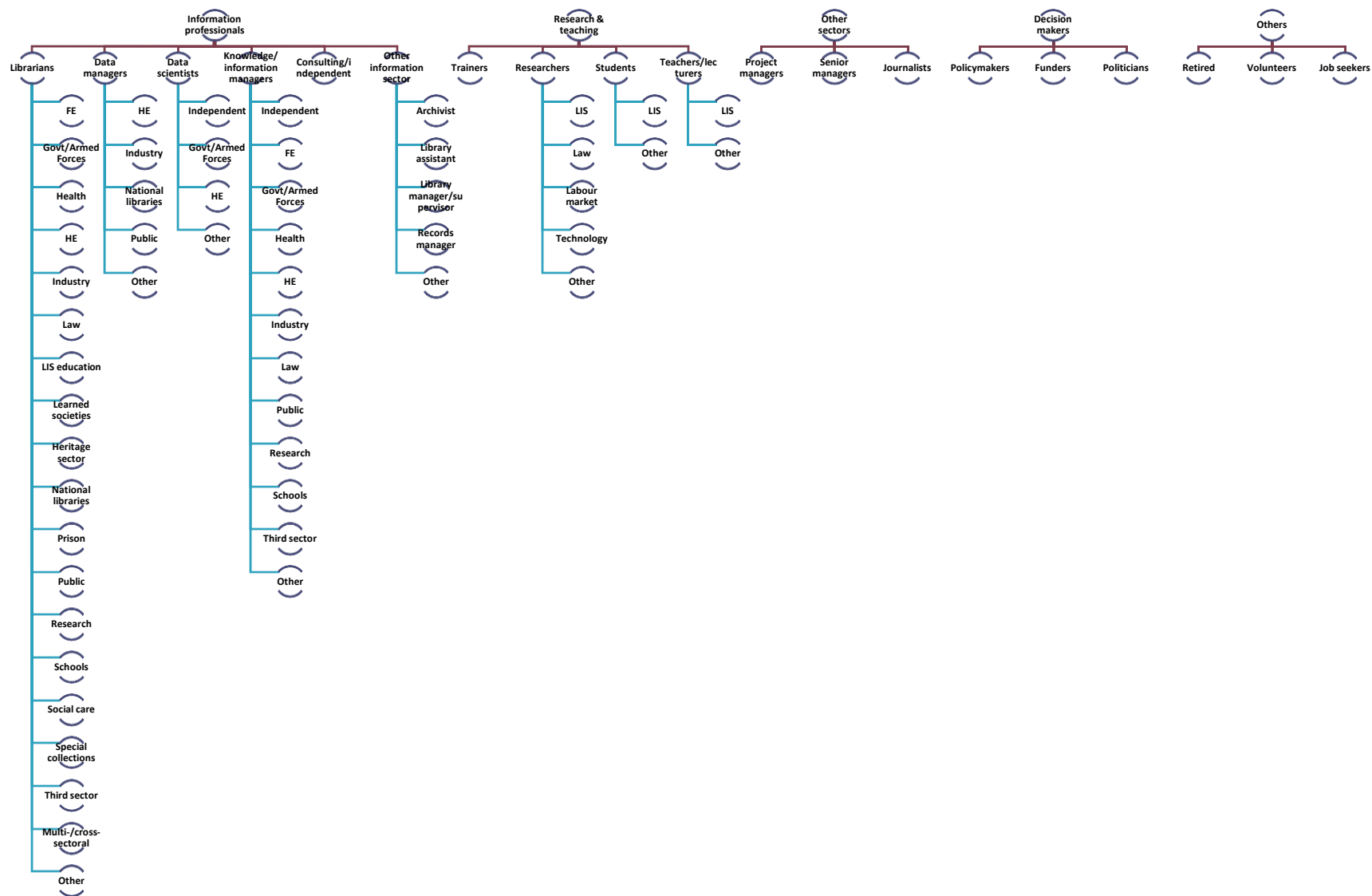
Information professionals

Librarians
- FE
- Govt/Armed Forces
- Health
- HE
- Industry
- Law
- LIS education
- Learned societies
- Heritage sector
- National libraries
- Prison
- Public
- Research
- Schools
- Social care
- Special collections
- Third sector
- Multi-/cross-sectoral
- Other

Data managers
- HE
- Industry
- National libraries
- Public
- Other

Data scientists
- Independent
- Govt/Armed Forces
- HE
- Other

Knowledge/information managers
- Independent
- FE
- Govt/Armed Forces
- Health
- HE
- Industry
- Law
- Public
- Research
- Schools
- Third sector
- Other

Consulting/independent

Other information sector
- Archivist
- Library assistant
- Library manager/supervisor
- Records manager
- Other

Research & teaching

Trainers

Researchers
- LIS
- Law
- Labour market
- Technology
- Other

Students
- LIS
- Other

Teachers/lecturers
- LIS
- Other

Other sectors

Project managers

Senior managers

Journalists

Decision makers

Policymakers

Funders

Politicians

Others

Retired

Volunteers

Job seekers

Figure 5: Potential stakeholders for a research portal/evidence base

3.3 What types of content should a research portal/evidence base include?

Figure 6 shows the resources survey respondents felt to be most important for a research portal or evidence base for the information and knowledge sector (respondents were allowed to select up to five options). By far the most popular response was case studies or good practice exemplars (74.3%). As a respondent commented, whilst case studies might be less rigorous in research terms, they could be very useful to support practical implementation. Commenting on the apparent demand for case studies suggested by the survey, an interviewee commented:

> *… one of the reasons I am heartened about the case studies it suggests people are more interested in insight learning than just stats and good news.*

Another reflected that case studies could have relevance across, as well as within particular sectors:

> *…the case studies, that may be one of the issues that goes across sectors, you can be inspired by, somebody in the university library can be inspired by the story of a value case study that has taken place in the public library and vice-versa.*

The next most popular resources were datasets/statistics (48.5%), academic articles (41.8%) and research reports (41.5%). There was least demand for grey literature (12.7%), research-related documentation (17.0%) and opinion/thought pieces (18.5%).
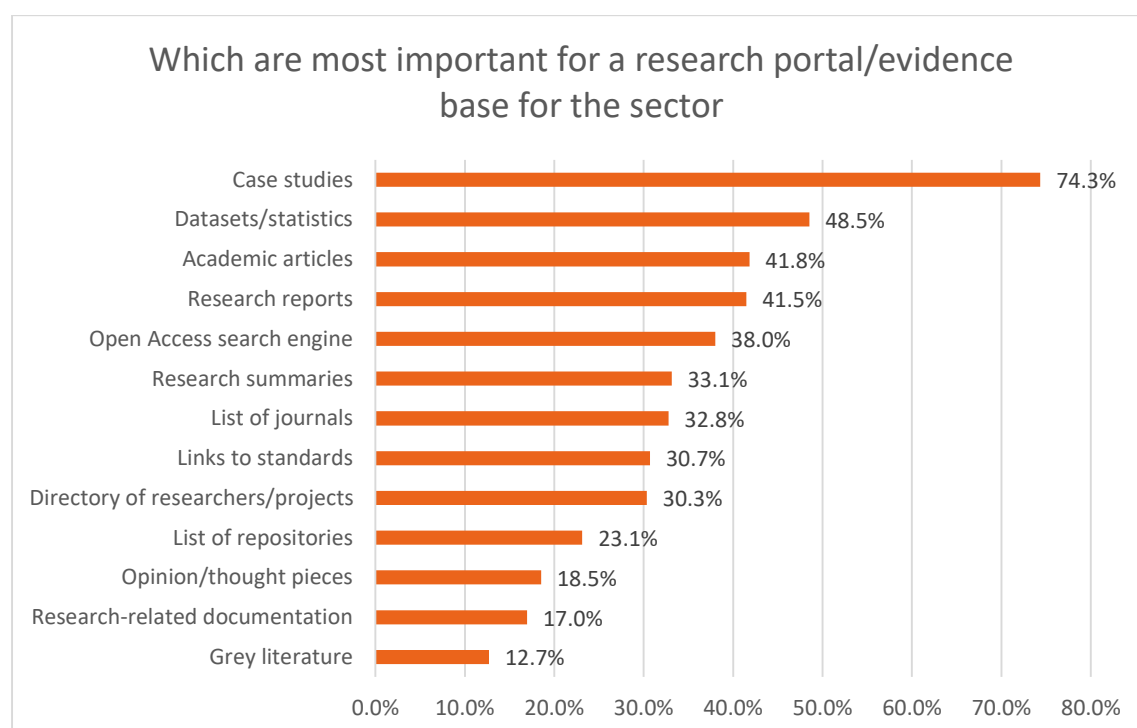

Figure 6: Importance of resources for potential research portal/evidence base

Table 7 shows the differences in perceived importance of various resources by sector. There were differences between sectors for academic articles, datasets/statistics, grey literature, list of journals and list of repositories (all $p<0.01$); and for opinion/thought pieces and research summaries (both $p<0.05$).

	FE (n=44)	Health (n=78)	HE (n=310)	Public (n=115)	Schools (n=132)	p value
Academic articles	54.5%	44.9%	49.7%	20.0%	42.4%	p<0.01
Datasets/statistics	40.9%	30.8%	52.3%	70.3%	43.9%	p<0.01
Grey literature	0.0%	32.1%	12.3%	3.2%	4.5%	p<0.01
List of journals	43.2%	29.5%	29.7%	28.4%	44.7%	p<0.01
List of repositories	25.0%	21.8%	27.4%	5.8%	17.4%	p<0.01
Opinion/thought pieces	18.2%	9.0%	14.8%	25.8%	21.2%	p<0.05
Research summaries	20.5%	46.2%	33.5%	32.9%	28.8%	p<0.05
Case studies	84.1%	80.8%	78.1%	82.6%	86.4%	p>0.05
Directory of researchers/projects	25.0%	38.5%	31.0%	23.2%	17.2%	p>0.05
Links to standards	34.1%	37.2%	28.4%	32.9%	38.6%	p>0.05
Open Access search engine	45.5%	35.9%	31.6%	38.7%	43.9%	p>0.05
Research reports	43.2%	39.7%	45.2%	38.7%	34.1%	p>0.05
Research-related documentation	15.9%	14.1%	19.0%	19.4%	12.1%	p>0.05

Table 7: Resources most important for research portal/evidence base by sector

Table 8 shows the five most important resources for each sector.

FE	Health	HE	Public	Schools
1) Case studies	1) Case studies	1) Case studies	1) Case studies	1) Case studies
2) Academic articles	2) Research summaries	2) Datasets/statistics	2) Datasets/ statistics	2) List of journals
3) Open Access search engine	3) Academic articles	3) Academic articles	=3 Open Access search engine	=3 Open Access search engine
=4 Research reports	4) Research reports	4) Research reports	=3 Research reports	=3 Datasets/statistics
=4 List of journals	5) Directory of researchers/projects	5) Research summaries	=5 Links to standards	5) Academic articles
			=5 Research summaries	

Table 8: Top 5 resources by sector

As can be seen, case studies were identified as the most important type of resource across all of the sectors analysed. Data sets/statistics were in the top five for schools, public and HE. Open Access search engine appeared in the top five for schools, public and FE sectors. Academic articles were one of the five most important resources for all sectors except public. Schools and FE sectors saw a greater need for a list of journals than other sectors. Research summaries featured for health, HE and public sectors. Resource types that only featured in the top five list for a single sector were: links to standards for public libraries and a directory of researchers/projects for the health sector.

Amongst Knowledge and Information Managers responding to the survey, the top five resources for a potential portal or evidence base were:

- Case studies (61.1%)
- Research reports (40.3%)

- Datasets/statistics (34.7%)
- Directory of researchers/projects (34.7%)
- Research summaries (33.3%).

The word cloud below (Figure 7) shows the types of resources offered by the 48 evidence portals examined during the desk research. The larger the text, the greater the number of portals that offered the resource. As can be seen, the resources that appeared across the greatest number of portals included: links to Twitter and LinkedIn, events and blogs. The word cloud also illustrates the extremely wide range of resource types that might be included in a portal.

Figure 7: Types of resources available on evidence bases analysed

3.4 What should be the key features of an evidence base/research portal?

As shown in Figure 8, the most important features of a potential evidence base according to survey respondents were: freely available (90.8% rated important or very important); rigor of evidence (89.1%); regular updating (81.0%); and sector-wide coverage (76.0%). Personalisation (44.4%) and multimedia (27.9%) were seen as less important.

IMPORTANCE OF FEATURES OF POTENTIAL RESEARCH PORTAL/EVIDENCE BASE

■ Very important ■ Important ■ Moderately important ■ Slightly important ■ Unimportant ■ No opinion

Feature	Very important	Important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Unimportant	No opinion
MULTIMEDIA	9.0%	18.9%	33.5%	19.7%	14.1%	4.9%
PERSONALISATION	16.6%	27.8%	31.0%	14.4%	8.0%	2.1%
REGULARLY UPDATED	43.6%	37.5%	13.8%	2.7%		
SECTOR-WIDE COVERAGE	34.6%	41.4%	15.9%	2.8%		3.2%
RIGOR OF EVIDENCE	54.8%	34.3%	7.7%			
FREELY AVAILABLE	61.4%	29.4%	6.5%			

Figure 8: Importance of features of potential research portal/evidence base

Table 9 shows the percentage of respondents rating each feature as important or very important by sector. There were differences between sectors for rigor of evidence, personalisation, multimedia resources (all $p<0.01$), and free availability ($p<0.05$). There was no significant difference for sector-wide coverage or regular updating.

	FE (n=44)	Health (n=78)	HE (n=310)	Public (n=115)	Schools (n=132)	p value
Rigor of evidence	93.20%	85.90%	90.10%	90.40%	92.40%	p<0.01
Personalisation	36.40%	41.00%	25.80%	50.30%	64.40%	p<0.01
Multimedia	25.00%	29.50%	22.30%	28.40%	37.10%	p<0.01
Freely available	81.80%	84.70%	90.30%	95.50%	94.70%	p<0.05
Sector-wide coverage	79.50%	79.40%	74.80%	69.00%	82.60%	p>0.05
Regularly updated	81.90%	93.60%	81.30%	78.70%	82.60%	p>0.05

Table 9: Features rated important or very important by sector

The following section considers each of these key features of a research portal or evidence case in greater detail.

3.4.1 Access

Making content of the proposed portal freely available was most important to survey respondents from the public and schools sectors who are likely trying to manage particularly tight budgets.

Many of the portals reviewed made all content available free of charge (although it is possible that external links from these contain information behind paywalls of course). Examples are the ALA's LARKS, Knowledge for Health and the HEA's Knowledge Hub. Other portals however made some content freely available, whilst other resources or services were only available to subscribers. An example of this type of portal is Research in Practice. Yet others made all content available without charge, but required users to register in order to access the full range of resources. An example is the McMaster Optimal Ageing Portal. Finally, another option was to make content only available to

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subscribers/members, but allow access on a trial basis to non-members. An example is Management Direct.

Additional features related to access mentioned by survey respondents included: ensuring the site is easy to search and intuitive to use; the facility to search by sector and by region; meeting accessibility standards; and the provision of persistent DOIs for content.

3.4.2 Rigor

It is important to bear in mind that views on rigor and the validity of different types of evidence are likely to differ, for example, between different sectors and between individuals making use of research for different purposes. For instance, one interview was dismissive of case studies and talked about the need for 'real research', while others appreciated the potential value in rigorously conducted and reported case studies. This is not surprising given the cross-disciplinary nature of information studies: rigor in medical research can be very different from rigor in the humanities for example.

The portals reviewed during the desk research took a number of approaches to the evaluation of evidence including:

- Rating for transparency, usability and evidence-based (McMaster Optimal Ageing Portal)
- Assessment of systemic reviews and summary of review by portal partners (Evidence Aid)
- Peer review (UpToDate)
- Assessed by named individuals working in the field (BestBETs for Vets).

3.4.3 Coverage

The question of sector-wide coverage was raised by a number of survey respondents. For example, one felt, "There is a danger that if the research portal is too broad and encompasses all sectors then it becomes more irrelevant to consult". Likewise, interviewees cautioned about the need to be realistic about what was possible:

> …it's possible to have the ambition but not sure going to get an equal representation of all sectors.

Another aspect of coverage mentioned by survey respondents was the need for international coverage to ensure the sharing of research and knowledge from beyond the UK where this was appropriate.

3.4.4 Updating

Frequency of updating was felt to be highly important, with a number of survey respondents commenting that this needed to happen continually. Amongst the portals reviewed, the vast majority had last been updated within the previous month.

Both survey respondents and interviewees also felt it was important to publicise new additions to a portal, for example, via alerting tools.

3.4.5 Personalisation

There appeared to be greatest interest in personalisation from schools and public sectors. Personalisation was not a common feature of the portals reviewed and where it was offered, this was often limited to subscribers. Ways in which users were able to personalise their experiences included:

- Saving resources to read later
- Creating a list of favourites
- Subscribing to newsletters, updates, alerts etc.

3.4.6 Interaction

Some of the interviewees suggested there was a benefit to allowing people to upload their own research or case studies, although there would need to be an element of checking or quality control. The ability to comment on resources was another way in which interviewees felt the portal might be made interactive. Further ideas for interaction suggested by survey respondents included: a 'scoring system' for quality and reusability; the facility for peer review or commentary on resources; and discussion provision (e.g. chat forum).

The portals reviewed allowed interaction in different ways. The Observatory for a Connected Society (OCS) allows users to comment, share and like posts (see Figure 9). This app has been launched relatively recently and it appears that, as yet, these features are not being well-used: only two articles published within the last month had received one comment each.
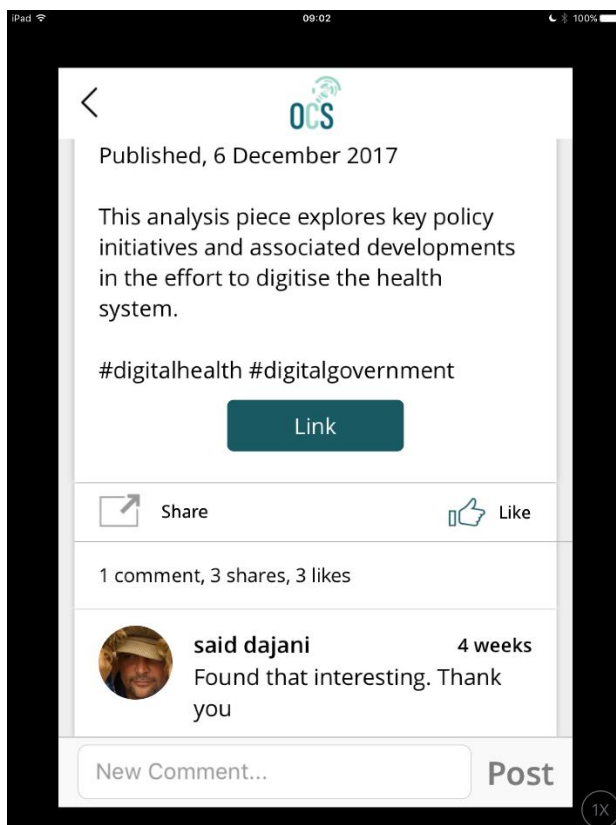
Figure 9: An example from the OCS

The Conversation allows users to submit content for publication as well as commenting and sharing on social media. As illustrated in Figure 10, there is greater use of the comments facility on this site to instigate more in-depth discussions and it is common for the article author to respond to comments.
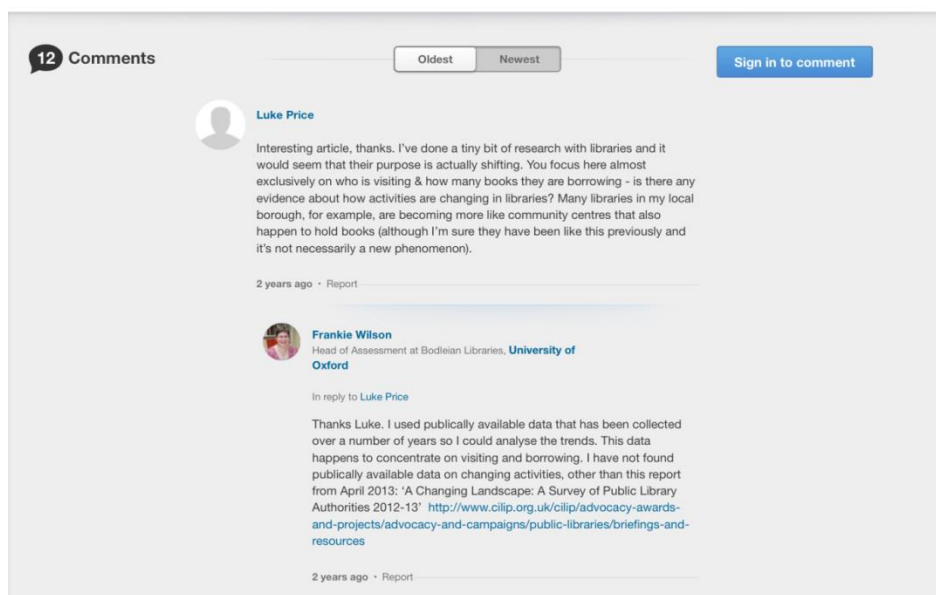
Figure 10: Example from The Conversation

3.4.7 Tools

Existing portals offer a wide range of tools to meet the needs of their various audiences. Examples include interactive scenarios and problem solving tools (Management Direct); and *Value and Impact* and *Talent Management* Toolkits (Knowledge for Healthcare).

Amongst survey respondents and interviewees, ideas for tools that could help to add value to resources provided via a portal included:

- Analysis, manipulation and visualisation tools for data sets
- Ability to export references
- Ability to link two or more datasets (from different sectors).

3.5 How might a portal/evidence base be funded?

The portals reviewed as part of the desk research were funded in a variety of ways including:

- User subscriptions
- Support from parent institution
- Support from charitable foundations
- Support from government
- Corporate sponsorship
- Commercial activities
- Donations.

Comments from the survey respondents and interviewees suggest that it is important that any CILIP portal is co-funded (or supported in-kind) by a range of organisations, not simply for the financial value of such contributions, but also for the messages this will send about the resource being supported widely across the information and library sector. The value of involving academic partners was also pointed out; these are likely to help to give the portal greater academic rigor and validity, which could in turn make it more appealing to potential funders (and users) in this sector.

Interviewees suggested a number of possible funding sources, including RCUK, AHRC, Carnegie, partners in the former library research coalition, Wellcome and Joseph Rowntree Foundation. The potential role of publishers was also discussed, although it was acknowledged that this could be difficult if it meant allying with one publisher rather than another.

Some interviewees also offered further support should work on the portal progress further, including DCMS, Jisc, British Library, Health Education England and RLUK.

A collaborative approach to funding could help to ensure the ongoing sustainability of a portal, something that was felt likely to be one of the main challenges long term. Some interviewees referred to the resourcing required to scope out and develop a portal; to set up a portal; and to maintain a portal over the longer term. This is a consideration and the resourcing required will depend on the nature and features of the portal.

4. Conclusions

The level of response to the survey indicates there is likely to be some interest in an evidence base or research portal. However, further work is need to ascertain the scope of such a resource. A sector-wide portal for the library and information sector would have a wide remit: information professionals across a range of sectors from health, public libraries, HE, schools, but also prison libraries, National Libraries, industry and special collections to name but a few. There are also potential stakeholders engaged in research and teaching: researchers, lecturers, students and so forth. In addition, there are professionals from allied sectors, various categories of decision-makers and other groups such as volunteers and job-seekers. For some, the convenience of bringing resources together in one place and time saved may be sufficient to convince them of the value of a portal, but others would need to see some element of added value.

An important factor to bear in mind is that there is currently very limited use of research portals within the sector and comments from both the survey and interviews indicate that there is no common understanding of the term across the sector. It will therefore be important to be clear about the definition, scope and possible uses of any portal developed – what users can expect to find there; what it can do for them, what it cannot do, and so forth.

Whilst there is, generally, a high level of appreciation of the importance of research and evidence within the library and information profession, this does vary by sector. At present, the perceived importance of research is greatest within the health and HE sectors. This suggests that there may need to be different approaches and/or forms of presentation and marketing if a portal is to appeal not only to those who already think evidence is important, but also those who do not currently consider it to be so important.

Respondents from the health sector appeared to be most aware of what research and evidence is available; where to find it; and where the gaps in knowledge are – in short, use of evidence in this sector appears more developed, doubtless as a result of having been informed by developments in evidence-based medicine. In contrast, within the public sector, for example, there is less awareness of the availability of evidence and a lack access to research databases.

There were some differences in the types of resources used by sector. Health and HE sectors made the greatest use of academic journals; this is unsurprising as they are most likely to have easy access to these. Public libraries, on the other hand, were the most likely to use statistics. However, there was considerable overlap in the types of resources used. All sectors analysed appeared to value case studies. This possibly relates to one of the main difficulties reported when using research: the problem of relating research to everyday contexts. In addition to more formal types of resource, peer networks are seen as important.

Considering possible funding options, a consortium representing different sectors appears the most viable option. Free availability of the portal is seen as important. However, following examples of other portals, making some sections or features of the portal only available to non-CILIP members on a subscription basis may be an option to consider. Depending on the initial level of funding, a useful approach might be iterative, beginning with the most commonly requested resources to encourage widespread engagement, before adding further resources over time.

As some interviewees suggested, the portal could help to identify gaps in current research and evidence that may inform future areas of activity.

4.1 Model suggestions

Tables 10-13 set out features of a proposed model for the development of an evidence base or research portal. Features are divided into those considered essential, recommended, additional possibilities and options to be considered in the future.

Essential features
• **Case studies:** these are seen as important across sectors to help users to find ways to put research into practice. Initially, case studies could be gathered from existing sources (e.g. research reports), with additional case studies being sought once gaps are identified. • **Data sets/statistics:** these are especially important for the public and HE sectors and providing useful statistics in a convenient location is likely to attract users to the site • **Link to Open Access search engines or repositories** (e.g. Jisc's CORE search engine, e-LIS repository): this will be especially useful for sectors that may not be aware of such tools already (e.g. schools, public) • **Research reports:** current and previous research reports tagged by sector, theme etc • **Regular updating:** updating at least monthly is crucial to demonstrate that the information provided is current and reliable. • **Different entry points (e.g. by sector, uses of evidence (advocacy, service improvement, national/local level etc) and key topics):** these will help new users to quickly see that portal contains resources relevant to them. • **Sharing option for resources (e.g. share on Twitter):** this is a standard feature of many portals and would promote greater awareness of the portal as well as encouraging interaction.

Table 10: Portal Model: Essential features

Recommended features
• **Summaries/ structured abstracts summarising key papers and reports with a focus on practical implications:** this is one way in which the portal could add value to existing resources, in particular, highlighting the practical implications and any limitations of the research methods. • **Sector-specific resources:** stakeholders pointed out that the portal needs sector-specific resources, otherwise it is likely to be too broad to be really useful. There may also be benefits in offering a slightly different approach for different sectors that could be developed in consultation with the relevant organisations representing each sector. Some considerations for specific sectors are given below. *FE: OA search engine important, list of journals would be useful* *Health: Greater awareness more established use of evidence influenced by evidence-based medicine. Use of resources not found significantly in other sectors e.g. assessment reports, research reviews* *HE: Access to resources less of a problem; interest in datasets* *Schools: Greater interest in personalisation and multimedia resources than other sectors. Free availability important and links to OA search engine.* *Public: Lack of awareness where to find research is more of a problem for this sector. Datasets are important along with access to OA resources. Some interest in personalisation.* (Note: in addition to these sectors**,** others such as prison, law etc may have specific needs that there was not sufficient representation to determine these in through research). • **Indications of rigor:** whilst developing a single 'scale' of rigor is not likely to be possible given the cross-disciplinary nature of information studies, it would be possible to highlight information about the rigor of evidence presented (where available) and explain what this means to allow a user to make a more informed decision about a resource (e.g. peer review, editorial review, information about the funder). • **Link to existing CILIP resources (e.g. LIRG research tutorials):** this is likely to encourage use of the portal and capitalise on the recognition and trust of the CILIP 'brand' within the sector.

Table 11: Portal Model: Recommended features

Additional features to be considered
• **Journal articles:** articles are one of the key resources used. However, this raises the problem of establishing a method of access for those outside the academic sector which is likely to require finding a way to address licensing issues. • **Comments facility:** this may help to encourage interaction with the portal and provide feedback on resources, but would need to be moderated/monitored. An alternative may be to organise time-specific webchats based around a 'resource of the week/month'. • **Ability to export references** • **Briefing documents on key topics for different types of stakeholders:** these could be cross-sectoral and/or single sector issues and could provide an overview of research in a particular area and its implications for specific groups (e.g. strategic level, service managers, front line staff). • **Alerting service:** alerting subscribers to new additions in their areas of interest.

Table 12: Portal Model: Additional features

Further options to consider at a later date
• **Ability to contribute own case studies:** these could be submitted in a standard template that would then be checked before publishing. Case studies could be encouraged on particular themes identified as gaps. • **Combining datasets:** combining datasets to allow integration of data from multiple sources is a possibility, but is likely to require a funded research project to explore this. • **Research framework/gap analysis:** this may help to identify gaps and priorities for future research in the sector. This would likely require a separate project in its own right.

Table 13: Portal Model: Further options

4.2 Next steps

This report is, of course, only the first stage of this process. The research indicates that an evidence base/portal may well be of value to the information sector, and sets out a proposed model and issues to be considered, based on the data collected. The next stage is to consult more widely on this proposed model and develop specific examples to demonstrate some of the options suggested. There is no commonly accepted definition of a portal within the sector, so it is important to provide more details and concrete examples for stakeholders to comment on at the next stage.

Appendix A: Case studies of Portals

a. LARKS – Librarian and Researcher Knowledge Space (http://www.ala.org/tools/research/larks)
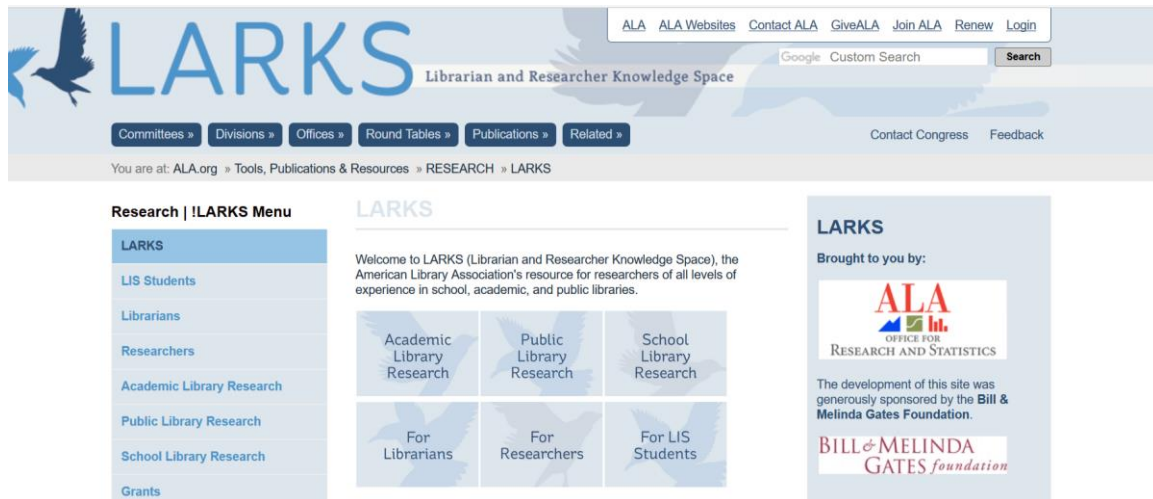
This is the knowledge portal of the American Library Association (ALA).

- It is a portal of a professional library association
- The links out of the portal are to authoritative sources
- It covers research for a focussed number of library sectors
- It orders the information into categories suitable for the type of user accessing the portal
- It links to Data, Tools, Journals and Reports
- The portal itself is open to non-members as well as members

b. DCMS - Libraries Taskforce Research Overview (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/libraries-taskforce-research-programme)

The Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport has a Libraries Taskforce that are collecting information and research about libraries in England. At present this is in the form of a spread sheet which is accessible from the GOV.uk website.
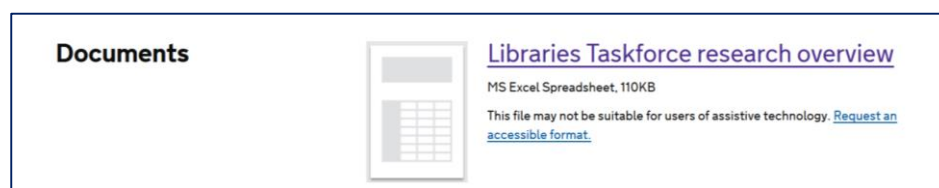
The spreadsheet workbook has separate sheets for the following categories:

- Policy Documents
- Completed Research
- Ongoing Research
- Planned Research
- Library Strategy Documents.

Each of the sheets order the information in various headings, for example:

Policy documents: Title of Document, date published, Commissioning organisation(s), Brief description of the purpose of the document, Brief summary of the contents, Link to the document, Contact for more information (where known).

Completed, ongoing and planned research: Title of Research, Date published, commissioning organisation(s), Funding organisation(s), Person/organisation who conducted the research, Brief description of the purpose of the research, Brief summary of the key findings, Category the research covers –primary/secondary, Geographical area research covers: local/national/ international, Cost of the research (where known and can be shared), Duration of the research (where relevant), Link to the research, Contact for more information (where known)

The research is further categorised into the main priority areas:

- *General: The future role of libraries*
- *General: Cross-cutting surveys [for those surveys that cover a range of Outcomes]*
- *Outcome 1: Cultural and creative enrichment*
- *Outcome 2: Increased reading and literacy*
- *Outcome 3: Improved digital access and literacy*
- *Outcome 4: Helping everyone achieve their full potential*
- *Outcome 5: Healthier and happier lives*
- *Outcome 6: Greater prosperity*
- *Outcome 7: Stronger, more resilient communities*
- *How we'll achieve this [this covers a range of topics including different models for delivering and funding library services, use of data and evidence, partnership working and workforce development]*
- *Making the case for libraries [this covers advocacy and communications activity]*

This resource is accessible to anyone. There is a link on GOV.uk where any contributions can be submitted through an online form.

c. The Conversation (http://theconversation.com/uk)
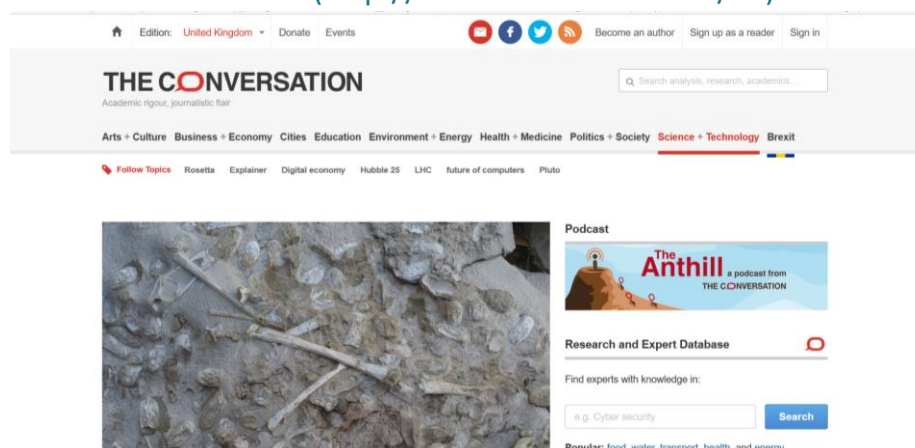
This is an example of a website with added value and authoritative information presented in a readable and understandable format.

The Conversation is really an online professional magazine but the content is written by academics working together with journalists. The information, research or comment is therefore put over in an objective but accessible way and each article has links to original research reports. The content of

the Conversation is free to read and republish under Creative Commons. It includes the following features:

- Videos and podcasts
- Open access content
- Accessible to all
- The experience and knowledge of contributors is checked
- Contributors are obliged to follow a code of conduct
- Articles include links to the academic basis of the article, for example data or reports
- Navigation around the site is easy
- The website is owned by a not for profit organisation

d. Observatory for a Connected Society (https://connectedobservatory.org/)

This resource is an example of a portal that is only available as an Android or iPhone app. It contains details, comment and links to recent work or policies about technology or digital issues in society. The app is free and available to anyone. However, you have to register. It sends alerts to your mobile device when a new article item is added.

- Contains government bills
- Reports
- International economic data
- Research
- Small opinion articles
- A calendar events

Each linked article is preceded by a summary written by a RAND Europe researcher. It also has a feature where you can join a network of other users.

e. The Health Literacy Place (http://www.healthliteracyplace.org.uk/)
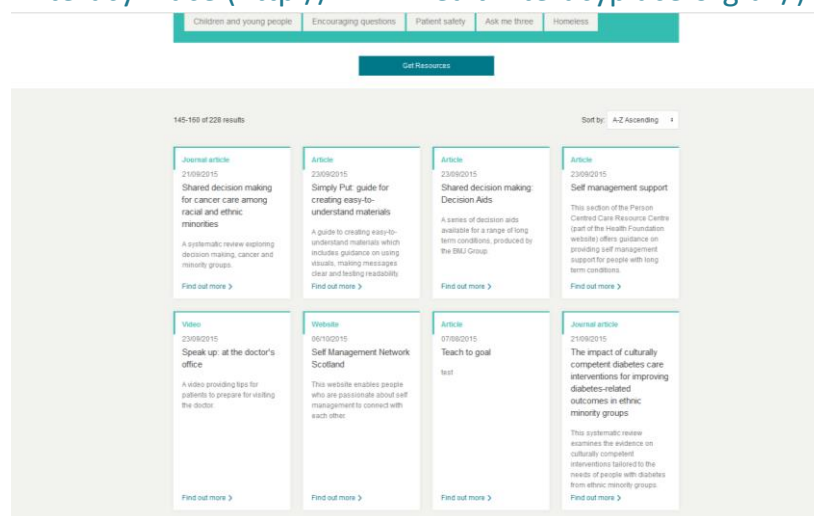
The Health Literacy Place is an NHS Scotland resource aimed at Health Education practitioners. It is a good example of a quick and easy system for users to search for relevant material on various subjects. Each item is labelled with its category and a brief description for its use and subject is given as a guide. Its features are:

- Contains links to tool kits, blogs, leaflets, articles, reports and case studies
- Most of the links appear to be to open access resources
- The website is free for anyone to use

f.   Research in Practice (https://www.rip.org.uk/)
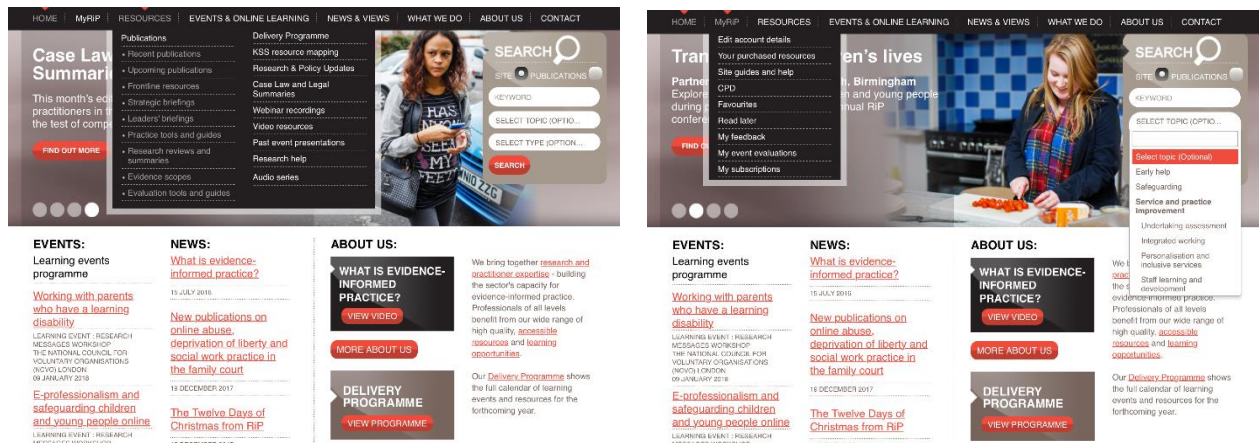
Research in Practice provides practitioners, managers, decision makers, policymakers with a range of resources and learning opportunities to support their efforts to improve the lives of children and families. It aims to enable safer decision-making, more effective resource allocation and robust child-centred practice.

Resources available through the portal include: frontline resources (for practitioners/managers); strategic briefings (for decision-makers); leaders' briefings (for councillors etc); practice tools and guides (guidance, ideas and tools for developing evidence-informed practice); research reviews (bring together knowledge on key topics, practice areas and research issues as well as evaluating the findings and implications); evidence scopes; case law summaries; research/policy updates; and research help. There are also audio, video, webinar recordings, event presentations and e-learning modules.

Most sections are freely available, but 'read later', favourites and newsletter subscriptions are only open to members (individual or organisational subscribers).

g. McMaster Optimal Aging Portal (https://www.mcmasteroptimalaging.org/)
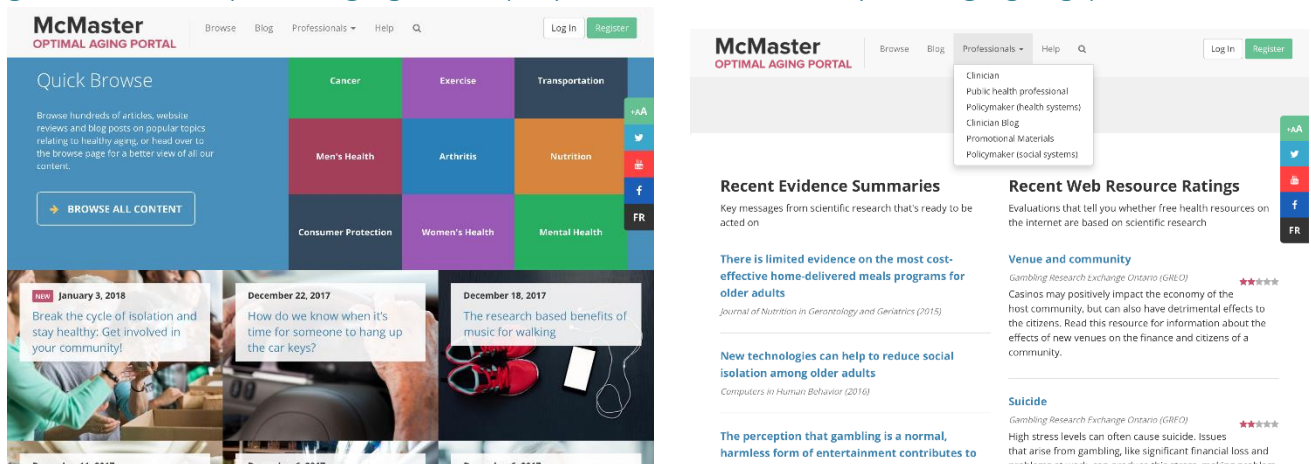
This portal emphasises the trustworthiness of the information it provides about healthy ageing through evidence-based blog posts (by professionals or members of the editorial team), web resource ratings and evidence summaries.

Web resources are rated on 1-5 scale for: accessed for transparency, usability, evidence-based. Data for evidence summaries is gathered from McMasterPLUS, Health Evidence and Health Systems Evidence databases.

It has a very wide remit; its audience includes the general public as well as clinicians, public health professionals and policymakers. It is free to access, but registration required to access all content. It is possible to set up email alerts and create a profile for different user categories.

h. LIS Research Coalition (https://lisresearch.org/links/)
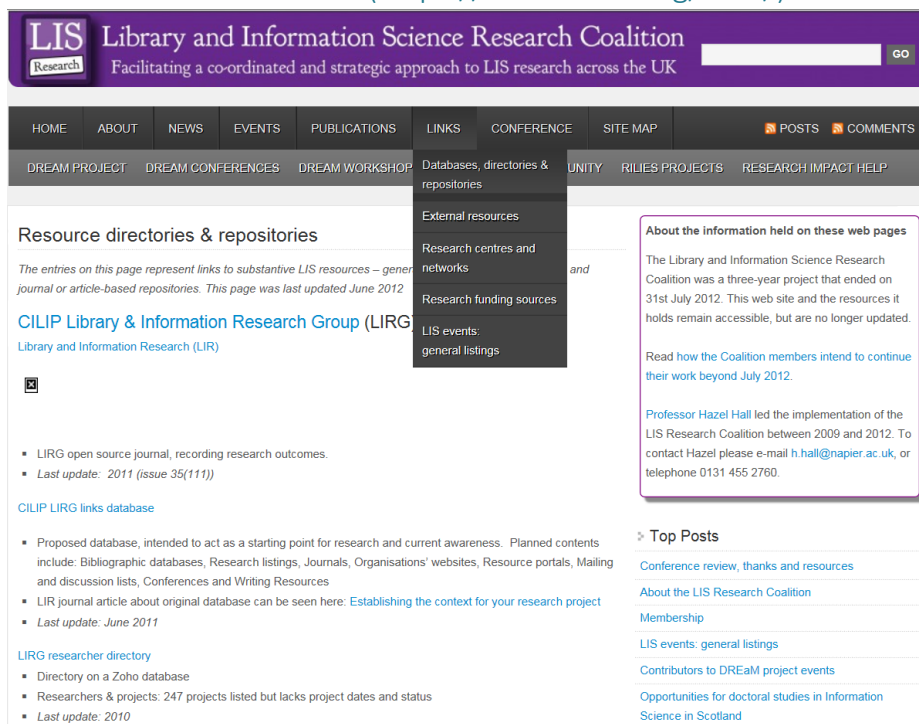
This has datasets (or access to datasets); contacts listing; current awareness service for newly published LIS research and a Twitter feed.

Appendix B: Copy of Research portal survey

Research portal survey

Introduction

This survey is being conducted by researchers from Birmingham City University and Manchester Metropolitan University. It is part of a project, funded by CILIP (the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals), to scope a vision for a sector-wide portal providing access to research and evidence for the information profession. For the purposes of this survey, the 'information and knowledge sector' includes libraries, archives, records, information management, knowledge management and data science.

We would be grateful if you could help with this research by taking a few minutes to answer the questions that follow. We would value your views on the uses and value of research and evidence in the sector. The survey should take around 5-7 minutes to complete. We will use the findings to produce a report that will be presented to CILIP. All responses will be treated in confidence and individuals will not be identified in our analysis.

If you have any queries, please contact Sarah McNicol at s.mcnicol@mmu.ac.uk.

Background

Would you describe yourself as mainly...

- ○ Data Manager
- ○ Data Scientist
- ○ Information Manager
- ○ Knowledge Manager
- ○ Librarian
- ○ Consulting/Independent Information Professional
- ○ LIS researcher
- ○ Other researcher (please give details of subject area)
- ○ Policymaker
- ○ Student
- ○ Teacher/lecturer
- ○ Not working
- ○ Retired
- ○ Politician
- ○ Other (please give details)

If you selected Other, please specify:

[   ]

Background information

Which sector do you work in?

- ○ Consulting/Independent Information Professional
- ○ Further Education
- ○ Government and Armed Forces
- ○ Health Care
- ○ Higher Education
- ○ Industry (Commercial Services)
- ○ Industry (Extraction)
- ○ Industry (Manufacturing)
- ○ Law
- ○ LIS Education
- ○ Museums, Archives, Galleries and Heritage
- ○ National Libraries
- ○ Not for Profit/Third sector
- ○ Prison
- ○ Public
- ○ Research
- ○ School
- ○ Social Care
- ○ Special Collections
- ○ Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

[   ]

Background information

Are you a member of CILIP?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Sources of research and evidence

Note: For the purposes of this survey research and evidence includes government reports, academic research, datasets, action research/practitioner research, reviews (meta-analyses) and evaluations.

Overall, how important is research or evidence to you in your current role?

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Unimportant	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Highly importar

How frequently do you use the following sources of research or evidence?

	Very frequently	Quite frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Very rarely or never
Data sets/statistics	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Standards	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Academic journals (print or online)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Professional journals/magazines (print or online)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Case studies/good practice exemplars	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Published research reports	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Research reviews (meta-analyses)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Research summaries/briefings	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Grey literature	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Evaluation reports	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Assessment reports	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Research-related documentation (e.g. funding sources, publishing advice)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Evidence bases/portals providing access to decision-making resources (please give details below)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If you frequently or occasionally use evidence bases/portals, please say which.

If you frequently or occasionally use any other sources of research or evidence not listed above, please give details.

Use of research and evidence

How do you make use of research or evidence in your current role? (Please tick all that apply)

☐ To improve existing services or practices
☐ To make decisions about new services or practices
☐ To inform policy development
☐ To influence others
☐ For professional development
☐ To develop training
☐ To inform your own research
☐ Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Do you experience any difficulties accessing research or evidence? (Please tick all that apply)

☐ Lack of time
☐ Lack of awareness where to find research or evidence
☐ Lack of research or evidence available to meet specific needs
☐ Too much research or evidence to evaluate effectively
☐ Unable to access relevant research/evidence (e.g behind paywall)
☐ Lack of skills to interpret research data
☐ Other

If you selected Other, please specify:

Developing a research/evidence portal

Which of the following do you think are most important for a research portal/evidence base for the information and knowledge sector to include? (Please select up to 5)

Please select no more than 5 answer(s).

☐ Data sets/statistics

☐ Directory of researchers/research projects

☐ Case studies/good practice exemplars

☐ List of relevant journals

☐ List of relevant repositories

☐ Links to relevant standards

☐ Grey literature

☐ Research reports

☐ Academic articles/publications

☐ Search engine for Open Access resources

☐ Research-related documentation (e.g. funding sources, publishing advice)

☐ Research summaries

☐ Opinion/thought pieces

Are there any other resources you feel are important for a research portal/evidence base to include? If so, please give details.

In your opinion, how important are each of the following features of a potential research portal/evidence base for the information and knowledge sector?

	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Unimportant	No opinion
Freely available (open access)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Rigor of evidence included (e.g. through review/independent scrutiny)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Sector-wide coverage	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Regularly updated (e.g. quarterly)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Personalisation (e.g. recommendations, ability to store resource to read later)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Multimedia resources (e.g. video, audio)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Are there any other features you feel are important for a research portal/evidence base to include?

Do you have any other comments you wish to make about the issues raised in this survey?

Follow up interviews

Thank you for completing the survey.

We are planning to conduct a small number of follow up phone/skype interviews with a selection of survey respondents. If you are willing to take part in a short interview, please complete your details below. Contact details will only be used for purposes of this research and will not be passed to third parties.

Name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Email:

Thank you for completing the survey